

Amendments to the Specification:

Please substitute the following amended paragraph 15:

Referring to FIG. 3, a flowchart of a method by which the network element 10 performs resource utilization monitoring according to one embodiment of the invention is shown. Broadly, the connection resource tracker determines for each of a set of resources within the network element whether utilization of the resource is above a specified threshold, and reports any such resources. At step 50 the network element is prompted to begin resource utilization monitoring, such as ~~the~~ receipt of a signal sent by an operator. At step 51 the connection resource tracker 32 receives a utilization threshold in the form of a percentage of maximum capacity, such as "80%" or "0.8". The utilization threshold can be received in a number of ways. As examples, the connection resource tracker could read the utilization threshold from a database, could access the utilization threshold from memory (including a hardcoded value), or could read the utilization threshold from a signal sent by an operator. In the latter case, the steps 50 and 51 could be combined into a single step of prompting the connection resource tracker by sending a utilization threshold.